

Advisory Council on Aging and Disability Services

618 Second Avenue, Suite 1020, Seattle, Washington 98104-2232 • (206)684-0660 • TTY (206)684-0274 • FAX (206)684-0689

Creating choices for elders and adults with disabilities in Seattle-King County

MONTHLY MEETING

MAY 13, 2005

MEMBERS PRESENT

CITY OF SEATTLE	KING COUNTY	UNITED WAY
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thelma Coney	<input type="checkbox"/> Gabriel Cohen, Vice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Martha Becker
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joanne Brekke	<input type="checkbox"/> Helen Spencer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lorna Stone
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adam John	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Holecek	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thelma Pegues
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alexandra Tu	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Barnett	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Timmie Faghin, Chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tom Rasmussen	<input type="checkbox"/> Larry Verhei	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don Moreland
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Larry Low, Secretary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lisa Yeager, Member At Large	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suzanne Wiley
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Houston Brown	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Midge Levy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Robert Gross	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant
<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant

Excused Absence Helen Spencer, Gabriel Cohen, Larry Verhei

Guests Phil Pitruzzello

ADS Staff Pamela Piering, Selina Chow, Linda Wells, Margaret Casey, Maria Langlais, Marcy Kubbs, and Andrea Yip

United Way Staff Linda Woodall

**King County
Staff**

MINUTES

Timmie Faghin, Chair convened the Advisory Council meeting at 12:00 p.m. and invited everyone attending to introduce themselves. City Councilmember Tom Rasmussen was invited to address the Council.

Councilmember Tom Rasmussen discussed three issues of concern that included the following:

- *City Light Rate Increases* – Councilmember Rasmussen invited feedback on the utility discount program.
- *Comcast Franchise Renewal* – City Council is currently reviewing the franchise agreement with Comcast cable service. Councilmember Rasmussen wants to hear what

In association with the Area Agency on Aging for Seattle-King County and sponsored by:



City of Seattle



King County

thoughts the Advisory Council might have on this topic. The Executive Committee will consider the issue.

- *Water, Sewer, & Garbage Assistance* – City Council has asked Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) to explore ways they might assist individuals having difficulty paying their combined utility bill.

Action Taken: It was moved/seconded and passed that the Advisory Council write a letter to support SPU developing a program in the coming year to ensure low income seniors and adults with disabilities are not denied essential services.

PROGRAM TOPIC

SOCIAL & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: 2005 LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP

Tom Fender, Executive Director of the Washington Association of Area Agencies on Aging (W4A) provided a PowerPoint presentation on “How a Bill Becomes Law”, a process he likens to making a decision with 147 of your neighbors. With 87 State Representatives serving 2 years and 49 Senators who serve 4 years, 25% of the legislative body changes every election, resulting in the need to provide continued education on issues. This year there were 700 Senate bills and 1000 House Bills, most of which “never saw the light of day”.

Bills are assigned by topic to one of the five standing committees - Health & Long-Term Care, Labor, Financial, Judicial, and Ways & Means. Once bills pass out of these committees they go to the Rules Committee where it is determined which bills will be considered. In 2005, most bills died in the Rules Committee. From the Rules Committee a bill goes to the floor where in Washington either the House or Senate can make more changes. Washington State has a bi-cameral system which means bills go to either the House or Senate before moving on to the other house. Once a bill passes both houses, it moves on to the governor who can do one of four things: veto the bill, veto sections of it, do nothing, or sign the bill. As a result, it is a challenge to pass a bill and easy to kill it.

According to Tom, legislators listen primarily to the media, lobbyists, executive branch and constituents. Constituent input is very important and Tom recommends individuals promoting an issue to a legislator do so in three visits.

- First Visit - Look for common ground and give an overview of the issue, some data and ask their advice.
- Second Visit – Discuss key elements of issue, give examples, more data and follow-up on any questions remaining from the previous visit.
- Third Visit – Present your proposal in writing, look for sponsors of a bill carefully and evaluate the need for professional assistance.

Before visiting your legislator, check out their website at: www.leg.wa.gov. Look for the legislator's background, committee assignments and in particular what topics are of interest to them. It is also helpful to know important members of the Legislature such as committee chairs.

Tom reviewed a few highlights of the 2005 legislative session, including passage of the Prescription Drug Purchasing Bill that will increase savings to the State because of its power to purchase in bulk quantities. Other achievements included funding the Farmer's Market Program and sustaining home care services for elders and adults with disabilities.

BUSINESS MEETING

Action Taken: It was moved/seconded and passed that the March 11, 2005 minutes be approved after adding "Medicaid" to the Outreach and Advocacy report to clarify Lori Whittaker's comment that President Bush's proposed budget includes the elimination of \$16 million in funding for Medicaid. It was also suggested that the correct spelling of Council's on-line magazine should be "Senior Digest" not "Senior's Digest". [Note: The correct spelling is "Seniors Digest".]

COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS

Planning and Allocation Committee

Thelma Coney reported that the revenue picture for 2006 is flat. United Way will reduce funding for aging services by 7% effective July, 2005. Three program areas needing additional funding are:

- Volunteer Transportation
- Transportation for nutrition sites
- Information & Assistance (due to increased calls)

Outreach and Advocacy Committee

Martha Becker reported that people receiving benefits such as Medicaid will receive a letter from Social Security in the next few weeks advising them that they may be eligible for the Medicare Prescription Drug Program. In November 2005, all Medicare beneficiaries will be given the option to participate in one of a number of prescription drug plans. Medicare beneficiaries must choose whether they want to participate in this program, and select a plan by May 2006.

Also, letters will be sent under Timmie's signature to all state legislators thanking them for their support during the last session and requesting their assistance with the current gap in funding for the Case Management program. She requested members send letters to their own legislators with a similar message.

Will Parry, former Advisory Council member, indicated that the goal of the White House Conference on Aging is to come up with not more than 50 recommendations to be acted upon. Will indicated it may be helpful for members to contact local congressman and their aides to encourage their attending Advisory Council meetings. Martha suggested the Advisory Council identify issues that can be taken to the White House conference.

Communications Committee

Timmie Faghin reported the May issue of the Seniors Digest includes a feature on Advisory Councilmember, Thelma Coney. Caresource Healthcare Communications assists in the development of Seniors Digest which continues each month to experience an increase in visits or “hits”. Larry Low expressed appreciation for the inclusion of Advanced Directives information in the April issue of Seniors Digest as it has been used extensively by staff at the VA Hospital. As a parting contribution, Suzanne Wiley agreed to write an article in the future for Seniors Digest.

Universal Design

Margaret Casey, ADS staff, reported that while Aging and Disability Services (ADS) isn’t able to fund housing it is able to provide education on universal design. The Universal Design Coalition focuses on two basic initiatives:

- Aging in Place to encourage individuals building new homes or remodeling to design in a manner that will enable owners to remain in their homes as their abilities change
- Healthy Aging / Active Living by Design promotes designing the larger built environment of our communities in a manner encouraging individuals to remain active

On Thursday, May 19th the Universal Design Coalition will celebrate the groundbreaking of the new home being built in Tukwila that will include Universal Design features developed by Seattle Pacific University’s design class under the instruction of Susan Duncan and Sandra Hartje. A number of individuals are expected to be in attendance including the Mayor of Tukwila. A documentary film is being made of the entire design/build process. One of the mobile workshops at the July n4a conference will feature a tour of this home.

Members of the Universal Design Coalition also participated in a “Walking Audit” of Kubota Garden with Dr. Margaret Kitchell of Feet First. While results of the audit found the garden very accessible, the neighborhood surrounding the garden including the bus stop one might use to get to the garden is, however, far less accessible.

Health Care Task Force

The Task Force had a joint meeting with the Outreach and Advocacy Committee this month. The Advisory Committee was reminded that the Hearing Speech and Deafness Center will be holding their annual Communication Fair on Saturday, May 21st and Monday, May 23rd.

State Council on Aging

Joanne Brekke reported that on June 24, 2005 a conference will be held in Cheney, Washington to identify issues to be presented at the White House Conference on Aging. This eastside conference titled "The Future is Now" will include five breakout sessions on the following topics:

- Older American's Act
- Access to Health Care
- Financial Security
- Healthy Aging & Long-term Care
- Elder Friendly Communities

With regards to the "Cash and Counseling" program, Joanne reports there has been a change in leadership. She does not expect program implementation until this fall.

Special Recognition

Suzanne Wiley who recently submitted her resignation to the Council was thanked for her five years of participation on the Advisory Council, and in particular for her hard work while serving on the Planning and Allocation Committee. She was presented with a plaque as a token of appreciation for the contributions she made while serving as a member of the Council.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Pam Piering reported on several items including the following:

1. Rosemary Cunningham, ADS staff, is currently in Washington D.C. at a national forum on Health Aging and Partnering with Public Health. ADS was invited to participate as Washington State is one of the leaders in good models nationwide.
2. There have been several recent conferences and events taking place in the community including:
 - Health Aging Partnership conference
 - Alzheimer's Association Conference
 - Senior Services fundraising breakfast drawing over 400 people
 - W4A conference and staff training in Leavenworth
3. The n4a conference will take place at the Meydenbauer Conference Center in Bellevue on July 10-13. Volunteers are needed to assist with a variety of tasks including registration, filling packets, gathering evaluations, directing attendees. Anyone volunteering can attend the conference free for a day, for each day they volunteer.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

**Friday, June 10, 2005
12:00 – 2:00 p.m.
13th Floor Conference Room
Alaska Building
618 Second Ave, Seattle, WA 98104
www.adsadvisorycouncil.org**

Larry Low, Secretary _____